'We Feel Youth is Dull'

ADVICE TO MILADY

By LYDIA LANE

MATURITY IS WELCOME

"I am 38 . . . and don't care who knows it," says Nanette Fabray.

HOLLYWOOD—"I am 38 years old, and I don't care who knows it," Nanette Fabray told me as we chatted in the patio of her new home in Beverly Hills. "In this country we have a strange conception about age—a glorification of being 18. This creates a complex about telling your age—about clinging to the youthful category. I see no reason not to welcome maturity," she exclaimed.

"This is a very refreshing approach," I said and asked Nanette if her French heritage was responsible for this point of view.

"No. My father was born in this country," she revealed. "It's something I've learned from my European firends who live here. I love Hollywood. It offers everything wonderful—weather, an opportunity to work, an artistic and cosmopolitan society." Nanette smiled. "I'm so happy! Wait until you see my son. He is so big for five months."

"We were talking about the influence of your European friends," I reminded her.

"Oh, yes!" she said. "They have made me aware that youth is not all important. They feel the most interesting women are those who have lived long enough to reach understanding to be well-informed and able to carry on a stimulating and intelligent conversation. As one of my friends said, 'We feel youth is dull—something to be outgrown.'

"Just take a look at some of the world's most beautiful women. In my opinion there is no one to equal the fabulous Marlene Dietrich. And how about Loretta Young or Ginger Rogers? They are still young and glamorous, but it's been a long time since they were teen-agers.

"These women have not clung to youth, but they know there is no ceiling to beauty and that it can be created at any time of life.

"That old cliche, 'Be your age,' does not mean you have to live up to the date you were born. That can be meaningless. What counts is what comes across, and if you've seen Ginger or Loretta on TV you know what I'm talking about."

Nanette was wearing a sheath that showed how successful she had been in keeping her figure.

"I'm a dancer and my muscles are strong, but my son weighed nearly 11 pounds so I had to have a Caesarean. This meant I couldn't exercise right away. After the doctor gave me the go sign, I had to work hard to get my figure back in shape. I want to tell you, Lydia, that your exercises have helped me enormously. I'm not too enthused about reducing machines, but rather I like daily exercises where I use different body muscles.

"When a dancer wants to get back into condition, she knows the most help comes from that extra push. I do as many exercises as I feel are comfortable and then I do a series more. You have to expend yourself to give your muscles tone.

"But I'm a great believer in building up my system with vitamins. I was quite run down after the baby was born, and I know the formula my doctor gave me speeded up my energy. But here's an interesting thing, the vitamins darkened my hair. The color has really changed."

We talked of Nanette's acting career and her popularity on Sid Caesar's shows.

"We had such fun, but I would prefer not to do another series," she said. "It's better not to be typed. This year I would like to do just a few big shows or a movie.

"At one time I thought I'd never have a theatrical career. When I was in high school my nose was smashed in an automobile accident. They rebuilt it, but there was nothing they could do about the scars. I had to struggle with myself about being self-conscious, I really suffered. But time has softened the scars, and I can cover them fairly well with make-up.

"When I look back I realize that I put too much emphasis on this. People are so willing to take you at your own evaluation, and one has so much more to offer than glamor."

"You've been on the list of our ten best-dressed women, haven't you?" I asked.

"Several times," Nanette said. "I was not singled out for high fashion but for making fashion suitable to me and to the occasion. I used to change my clothes two or three times during rehearsals. It gave me a lift to put on a fresh blouse and skirt. And when there wasn't time for a change of make-up, I would splash cold water lightly on my face and pat it dry. Grooming sets off your clothes and you can't place too much emphasis on freshness," she said in parting.

THOUGHT FOR FOOD By Muriel Wilson

NO PANIC IN THE PANTRY

DID YOU EVER KNOW it to fail? . . . You leave the beds unmade and the dishes in the sink to take advantage of a sunny morning in the garden. You have on your oldest slacks, a tattered jacket and your head tied up in a faded scarf. You look like one of those queer characters that Victoria is supposedly noted for. Well what happens? A car turns into the driveway, there is no avenue of escape and no time even for a dash of lipstick.

Yes, you guessed it . . . company from up-Island. Why didn't they come yesterday? The house was all slicked up early and fragrant with the smell of fresh bread. Your hair was curled and you had on a smart pair of slim jims and a new sweater. Why didn't they come then?

It happens to all of us. After the first shock of being found unprepared you gather your wits . . . "of course, you will stay for lunch." As you lead the way into the house your mind skips ahead to explore the refrigerator . . . golly what is there to eat? The end of a cottage roll, some cold mashed potatoes, a bowl of chicken gravy, half an avocado, one tomato, three outside stalks of celery and, heaven be praised, a whole head of lettuce. Fortunately I had baked bread yesterday and there were plenty of eggs. Yes, I could manage. I began to be really glad to see my friends.

Well, let's see. First a cup of coffee. No food necessary as lunch is just in the offing. While the coffee did a few push-ups in the percolator I made a quick change into a skirt and sweater. After coffee Jim took the visiting husband for a look around outside leaving Mary and me to fix lunch. It never bothers me to have company in the kitchen while I cook . . . I can cook and talk. That was something I learned how to do when we were in the resort business on Salt Spring Island. Someone was always coming out into the kitchen to visit.

The first step towards lunch was to set the oven to 375 degrees. I gave Mary the job of making a tossed salad of the lettuce, celery, avocado and tomato. There were no green onions but I found a sprouted onion among a bag of green onions. These yellow shoots will always double for a green onion.

Now to concoct a casserole from the odds and ends in the refrigerator. Sometimes these casseroles born of desperation are particularly good and this one turned out well. I chopped the ham and a medium-sized onion (what would we do without onions?). I beat the mashed potatoes together with three egg yokes and seasoned it well . . . not forgetting a half a teaspoon of accent. This colorless, tasteless powder does just what the name implies . . . accentuates the flavor. To the potato and egg mixture I added the chopped ham and onion and the chicken gravy. Last I folded in the stiffly beaten whites of the three eggs and poured it into a buttered casserole. Half an hour in the preheated oven and it was done.

While the casserole was baking Mary set the table and I deep fried enough doughnuts for dessert. I always keep doughnut dough in the refrigerator. It doesn't have to be frozen, just refrigerated. It will keep perfectly for several weeks. It is always ready and especially handy for unexpected company. Fifteen minutes will heat the fat to frying temperature and cook a dozen doughnuts.

Our High Hat Casserole (it puffed up beautifully), the green salad, home-made bread and pickles were adequate. For dessert I opened a bottle of peaches to go with the doughnuts.

Unexpected company need not throw the domestic camp into a tizzy . . . it can be a happy occasion and a lot of fun.

Two pork chops can be stretched to feed four if combined with rice or spaghetti, an onion and a tin of tomatoes.

An omelette can be whipped up in minutes and biscuit mix on the shelf is a life-saver. A little ingenuity rather than apologies is the answer to impromptu meals.

"It's the latest! Exhale, and shoot a poisoned arrow; inhale, and a special deodorant in the mouthpiece sweetens your breath."